

then plunge us all into a terrible atomic war in an attempt to conquer the world. Or they have an alternative, that Russia will not overcome her difficulties and that her leaders will plunge us all into this same atomic war in an attempt to save an unpopular regime at home by a popular war abroad . . .

I can only say what the facts lead me to expect. I should expect soon to see the great Khrushchev gamble on collectivisation in operation. I should expect to see an intense, a tremendous, and a last effort to make Communism work in the country in which the Communist experiment began . . . I should think that, in the end, the effort would fail—human nature seems to make failure inevitable—and that in the end a more comfortable world must emerge. But of course, in the meantime, we can't count on that, or on being allowed to calculate the chances from the facts, which will almost certainly be hidden.

—R. M. HUTTON-POTTS,
February 12, 1955

KNOWING the grave implication of what's happening in and around Formosa Strait now we shall all watch carefully to see whether a middle way can open up before things go too far and neither side can draw back. Suppose

THE MIDDLE WAY

for a moment that Communist China would reconsider her decision to go ahead with the use of force if she could see some advantages in prospect as a reward for moderation. Suppose the parties could be persuaded to parley. Would the United States be disposed to make concessions on some of the matters which at present annoy Peking? Would she consider diplomatic recognition more sympathetically, and perhaps eventual admission of Red China to U.N.? Could there be an arrangement to neutralise Formosa so that it was controlled by neither Nationalists nor the Communists in the meantime, with the 10,000,000 Formosans being allowed to decide their own future after Chiang and his Nationalists had gone and the tension had died down?

I feel this may be the direction in which Western diplomacy is working behind the scenes . . . But I'm afraid that, on the surface, and at the moment, we can't get away from the disturbing fact . . . that if two forces, Communist China and the United States, won't budge from the road they say they're going to tread, a collision is inevitable—and that means a shooting war the extent and end of which no one can predict. It's a terrible risk that's being taken, this playing with fire. If the United States has reached the stage where she's determined that Communism shall be halted militarily in Asia, many of us think it's a great pity she didn't choose a better place than Formosa for the trial of strength. The rights and wrongs of sovereign title to Formosa are by no means clear cut.

—RUSSELL PALMER,
February 19, 1955

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